

Michael F. Easley
Governor



State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES 60 LEARN AND EARN SCHOOLS OPEN FOR FALL *Schools Help Thousands of Students Earn Free College Credit*

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today announced that 60 *Learn and Earn* high schools are opening across the state this fall to serve nearly 7,000 students in 53 counties. Students who cannot attend a *Learn and Earn* school but still want access to free college credit can now take courses through *Learn and Earn Online* from every public high school in the state.

“*Learn and Earn* helps students learn more now so they can earn more in the future and succeed in our global economy,” said Easley. “Every high school student in North Carolina needs to talk to their guidance counselor today about enrolling in *Learn and Earn* so they can take free college courses, reach their full potential and achieve their dreams.”

Learn and Earn schools are small high schools located on a community college or university campus and allow students to take high school and college courses at the same time in the same location. After no more than five years of study, students at a *Learn and Earn* school can receive a high school diploma and two years of college credit or an associate degree for free.

The first 13 *Learn and Earn* high schools opened in the 2005-2006 school year. Since then, *Learn and Earn* schools have reported dramatically lower dropout rates, higher ninth grade passing rates and higher End-of-Course test scores than non-*Learn and Earn* schools. Teachers in *Learn and Earn* schools have also reported higher job satisfaction and retention rates on the N.C. Teacher Working Conditions Survey than teachers in non-*Learn and Earn* schools. (Note: Please see attached list for the 60 *Learn and Earn* schools open for the 2008-2009 academic year.)

Students who do not live near a *Learn and Earn* high school can receive college credit for free by enrolling in *Learn and Earn Online*. As with *Learn and Earn* high schools, students can earn both a high school diploma and an associate degree or two years of transferable college credit to any state university in up to five years of study. Access to these courses is provided at every public high school in the state.

This fall, many students planning to attend a state university, community college or private college to complete their four-year degree are also taking advantage of the EARN (Education Access Rewards North Carolina) Grants. These grants join with other forms of assistance, such as federal Pell Grants, to replace the need for student loans. The EARN grants will provide 25,000 qualified students from families earning less than 200 percent of the poverty level, \$4,000 a year in assistance for two years. Students receiving the grant will be

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